

MAZHAB

In your temples, to His Name the voice is raised in prayer; in a house of images, when the bell is shaken, still He is the object of adoration. To vilify the religion or customs of other men is to set at naught the pleasure of the Almighty."

This rather noble passage gives us a hint at the evolution of a train of ideas which had resulted from Hindu-Muslim relations. In their social life the two communities remained apart, but in their speculative thought there was considerable compromise. Ramananda and his disciple Kabir (fourteenth century) are examples. Kabir was a Muslim weaver who founded a sect which still survives, and which claimed to be the children of Allah and Rama. Kabir was the ancestor of Nanak, who founded the sect of the Sikhs. Though the latter were driven later into enmity towards the Muslims, their faith was essentially a compromise between the doctrines of Hinduism and Islam. The spirit of compromise is seen later in the "Din Elahi" of Akbar. Havell thinks that the Brahman began to shape the metaphysics of Islam to guide its statecraft and to reconcile racial and social antipathies by bringing it into the Hindu synthesis, while the Hindus began to concentrate on the idea of unity of the Godhead. The Advaita philosophy of Sankaracharya was "the Brahmanical statement of Mohammed's formula, 'There is no God but Allah.' " One may refer also to the far more positively monotheistic philosophy of Ramanuja, and the cult of Satya-Narayana, the Muslim become Hindu deity, who preaches religious unity. The bigotry of Aurungzeb undoubtedly left a bitterness which still* exists. It is only fair to say that his policy may have been the result of a sense of the weakening of Muslim rule/

The advent of British rule turned Hindu-Muslim relations into a more political channel, though in the nineteenth century some have thought that an increasing fanaticism